

## How to Conduct an Agent Search in 15 Easy Steps

1. Write the best book you possibly can. (This includes revising it multiple times and showing it to trusted, knowledgeable readers.)
2. Research agents and make a list of every agent who represents the type of book you write. Try to make the list at least 30 agents long.
3. Divide the agents into three groups: dream agents, agents you'd *really* like to work with and agents you'd like to work with. (Remember, since you don't actually know any of these agents, you might be wrong.)
4. Write a killer query letter.
5. Send off your first batch of submissions, making sure to send to an equal number of agents on each list. (For example, 2 dream, 2 really like and 2 like...or three of each. Don't send out more than 9 on your first round.) Follow the guidelines of each individual agent or agency.
6. Track the submissions you send out.
7. Start writing your next book! Do not just sit around obsessively waiting.
8. When responses start to come back in, use them to gather information about your project. A preponderance of form rejections to submissions with only a query letter means you need to rework your query letter. If sample pages accompanied most of your submissions and you mainly got

- rejections, then take another look at your manuscript's opening. If you received a good number of requests for more pages, either full or partial manuscripts, hurray! Send those babies out there.
9. Once you've heard from most of the first round of submissions (whatever the answer) send out another round of submissions, after making any changes or tweaks necessary based on feedback from the first round.
  10. Track those submissions.
  11. Get back to work on your next book!
  12. If you get only form rejections on partial and full manuscripts, *consider* halting the process to revise again. If you get personal rejections on partial and full manuscripts, study them to see if they contain similar criticisms. If so, strongly consider revising. Do any of them contain criticisms that resonate with you? If so, strongly consider revising.
  13. If you get a request for a revision...feel flattered. Do so only if the request makes sense within your vision for your book and if you believe in and understand the changes requested.
  14. If you get an offer of representation, YAY! Thoroughly interview the agent and try to talk with some of his/her clients. Notify any other agents reviewing fulls and partials that you've received an offer and either give them a chance to read and offer, or politely withdraw your manuscript from consideration.
  15. Get back to work on your next book!